

## JOAQUIN MILLER'S SECOND LETTER.

Journal's Poet Correspondent Vividly Describes the Lone Land of the North.

Terrors of That Icy Mountain Path Are Mainly Inventions to Keep the Poor Man from the Klondyke.

And in That Country of Hidden Gold Cattle Can Live in Luxury and Products of the Earth Thrive Under Its Sun.

By Joaquin Miller.

Fort Wrangel, Alaska, July 29, via San Francisco,

Aug. 4.—This morning at daylight we crossed the watery line between the two great Saxon speaking nations, and a few hours later saw our first house in this vast, lone land of the North. It is the custom house, and hangs up against the dense, grim mountainside just a little above the ten-foot tide wash, as if afraid of getting in the water.

Water and woods, and woods and water—that is all. Large, strong arms of the sea are thrust up between the precipitous dark forests and snow capped peaks, where white clouds hover continually.

Room, silence, rest. Not a sound, no animate thing astir. Now and then a fish hops out of the glassy waves at a flash, and that is all. Not a bird of any sort, sea bird or land bird. All the way from Seattle to this point not a bird, if we except a single flock of ducks and half a dozen seagulls. Men say that what fowl there are are far away to the north. I only know they are not here.

A Silence Like That of Sunday.

And not an Indian on the land or the water, not one single canoe, all the way the best half of a thousand miles. They say the Indians are all busy in and about the fisheries. We passed two little trading or tramp steamers, and we met one mail steamer of this line in all these days, but this side of Victoria all was as still and empty as if we were the first to break this awful hush of wave and wood since the dawn of the first day. This large and impressive silence is like Sunday, one long, lonely, restful silence, and the men are all silent, thoughtful, kindly, quiet, and some of the women.

Mary Island, the place of customs and the post office, lies to the left of this mighty river, so like the Columbia, so like the Hudson, only ten times its size and impressiveness, and right before us lies what the prospectors who come and go with us call a mountain of gold. Men, especially an ex-Federal Judge who is with us, say it is the richest piece of ground in the world, and that the famous Treadwell mine, with its millions, is but a babe in arms in comparison with this mountain of quartz and gold that lies right in our path as we push on from the custom house toward the gold fields of the Klondyke.

Keeping Faith with Indians.

But it is an Indian reservation, and the Indians, a community under the leadership of a wise and good old Scotchman, known as Father Duncan, are reputed to be by far the best and most wise on the continent, and so the Government is loth to disturb them. More than that, it is a point of honor to keep strict faith with them, for they are guests of ours.

You see, Father Duncan had a difference with the Canadian authorities about his converts, and begged the United States for an island where his people could live apart from miners and travellers with rum, tobacco and bad ways of other sorts; and as he had a great and good name as a civilizer, we gave him this island. This was in the early eighties. In the early nineties gold was found all along the steep, starry new home of the Indians from the tide-wash to the snow that caps the peaks.

Many efforts and appeals to dislodge the Indians have been made, but the Indians are so humble and virtuous and kindly disposed, that they are pretty safe, unless a cruel man comes to be at the head of this department at Washington. A decision was rendered only quite recently entirely favorable to these simple savages.

Their City Fair to See.

Their little city, Metlakahla, is fairer to see from afar off, as well as close at hand, than almost any city of the white man's side. Clean streets a church that is almost a Cathedral in stateliness, sidewalks, three or four fire companies, little houses for hose and hook and ladder companies at several points, in fact, everything that the white man has, except a jail, policemen and politicians.

"No," said good Father Duncan, with a smile; "we have no need of either jail or police. As for politicians, we have no need of them and they, perhaps, have no need of us."

The place is built and maintained on the co-operative plan, and is certainly prosperous, for the people are perfectly content and happy, and not one of the several hundred has any notion of going to the mines. Let us take note of their condition here.

What the Klondyke Climate Is.

An old returning miner to the Mecca of our present pilgrimage, who has spent many Winters in Alaska, told me that at Metlakahla the climate in the Indian town was exactly like that at Klondyke.

"What, and you raise potatoes, cabbage, and so on in the upper region?" "Why, certainly, and the best hay I ever saw. I have seen grass as high as my head there in June, and cattle driven in from Juneau to Dawson are in better condition when they arrive than when they are started from the trail."

Now, what do you think of that, my readers, thousands of miles away? I have followed up this cattle story and find it true. I learned to-day that two bands of cattle were driven into the Klondyke last Summer, and that three bands have already been driven in this year. I find that a band of 1,000 sheep passed up these waters in a steamer a few days back, but I do not know certainly that they are now being driven into the Klondyke, but they could not well be meant for any other place.

That Road Not so Terrible.

And now as to the road, that fearful and perilous, steep and stupendous

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## MOTOR CYCLE IN A MAD RUNAWAY.

A John Gilpin Ride That Made Bike Scorcher Envious.

POLICE IN HOT PURSUIT.

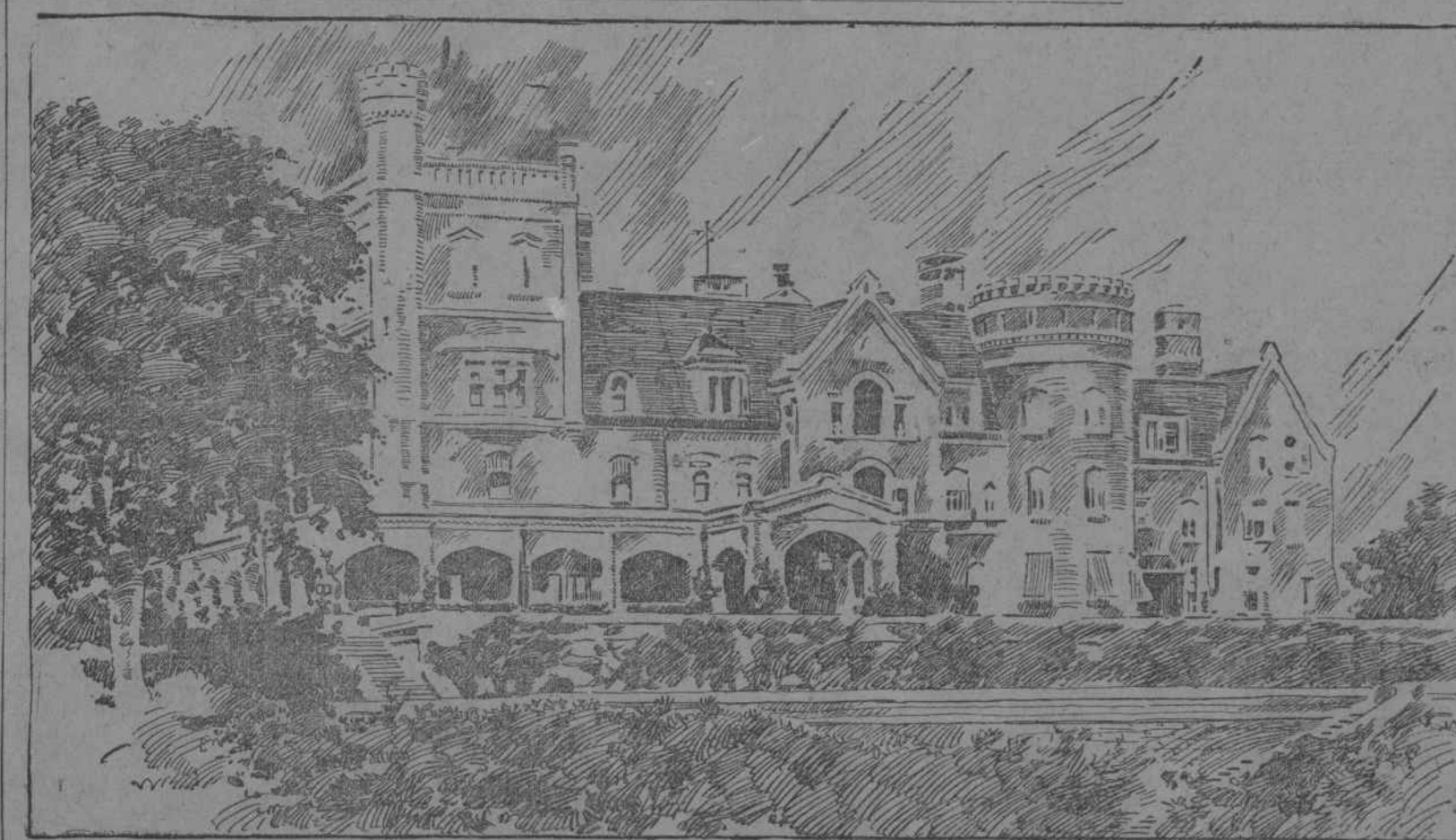
Howling Mob of Wheelmen Pursued the Flying Electric Machine.

THE LEVER WOULDN'T WORK.

George Sherman Made an Unwilling Record as a Fast Rider Until He Deliberately Ran Into a Ditch.

It has arrived at last—the runaway motor cycle. It made its first bow in Brooklyn yesterday afternoon and conducted itself with a wealth of eccentricity that would have cheered the soul of a colored supplement artist.

This particular machine is the invention of one George Sherman, of Jamaica, L. I. It is a formidable looking tri-cycle, with a small storage battery tucked away near the axle of the front wheel. Duntun, who cherishes it as the apple of his eye, took it out for a trial trip on Tuesday. While he was bumping sedately over the cobble stones of East New York, the power gave out, and he found himself beamed. In this predicament, he trundled the vehicle to the end of the street and Glenmore avenue, where George Sherman conducts the dual



WILLIAM ROCKEFELLER'S PRINCIPAL MANSION NEAR TARRYTOWN.

The house and grounds are the pride of Pocomtuck Hills, but Mr. Rockefeller intends, so his real estate agent says, to sell all and depart from Westchester. This because of the taxation of his estate. Henry Fielding, agent, says Mr. Rockefeller will sell for \$350,000 his estate, which is now assessed at \$2,533,805. Last year the assessment was \$1,100,000. The authorities declare the professed intention to sell is not sincere.

trades of a bicycle repairer and electrician. Sherman looked at the machine over, saw what was the matter and promised the inventor to fix it overnight if he would leave it. In his secret heart the versatile Sherman was yearning to take a ride, so he disassembled his feelings and Duntun, suspecting nothing, rode back to Jamaica on a trolley car.

Mounted the Monster.

Sherman applied a few deft touches to the brushes in the motor, and the machine was as good as new. Yesterday afternoon he left his shop in charge of a boy, took the tri-cycle into the street and mounted, having utterly neglected to make his will.

The lever was set against a dial plate on which various rates of speed were marked. Sherman was resolved to preserve a modest pace, so he set the indicator at the "five miles an hour" mark. Even as he did so the tri-cycle leaped forward with such violence as to nearly unseat him, and sped down Glenmore avenue at a rate that Sherman afterward declared seemed to him at least a mile a minute.

The rider's hat blew off at the first bound, and he found it necessary to cling to the guides like grim death in order to avoid being thrown. Whenever the wheels struck a hole in the roadway the machine rocked from side to side like a corkle shell. Bending over their handlebars they started in pursuit, followed by a small army of civilian wheelmen.

There seemed to be method in Sherman's madness. When he reached the corner of Enfield street something prompted him to wheel into that thoroughfare. Thence he turned into Broadway, the clockwork of the motor sounding above the clang of the gong. The bicycle policemen, who had

men are not admitted within the gates of the Caven Point works. So when this edition of the Journal went to press but meagre details of the fire were at hand.

As early as 9 o'clock last night a thin sheet of black clouds formed on the western horizon, though the moon was then visible through the misty atmosphere. Fork lightning and chain lightning played in the heavens over New Jersey for some minutes before the rain descended, lighting up Jersey City and even Union Hill so that the streets there were plainly visible from West street, this city.

Related Coney Island excursionists and those on the Grand Republic's roof garden got a drenching, while crossing Battery Park to the elevated and cable cars.

The weather report this morning was that the heated condition remained nearly stationary in the Gulf and South Atlantic States and Ohio Valley. The thermometer on Park row gave a similar impression. Those who say at 3:30 p. m. that the degree of heat was 88 might have found some consolation in the thought that at the same hour last year it was 90.

## LIGHTNING STRUCK THE STANDARD OIL.

Midnight Flash Hit a Tank at the Caven Point Works.

BIG FIRE SPREADING.

Jersey City Firemen Are Not Admitted Within the Works.

BRILLIANT ELECTRIC STORM.

The Day, Humid and Oppressive, Was Ended by a Thunder Gust, Furious and Tropical.

Just before last midnight a brilliant electrical storm broke over this city and its vicinity. Rain fell as if a deluge was threatened, fierce and vivid lightning flashed.

A flash of lightning struck the Standard Oil Company's works at Caven Point, in the Greenville district of Jersey City, on the shore of New York Bay. These works are dotted with huge tanks, full of oil, and stills for refining it.

The flash ignited one of the tanks, or stills. At 1 o'clock this morning the fire seemed to be spreading. The blaze that lit up the sky over Jersey City was growing wider, of a deeper red.

The Standard Oil Company has a fire department of its own. The Jersey City

## WILLIAM ROCKEFELLER OFFERS MILLIONS FOR THOUSANDS.

ROCKEFELLER'S OFFER.

Henry Fielding, real estate agent of Tarrytown, and William Rockefeller's agent in contesting the assessed valuation of his property, announced yesterday that because of excessive taxation Mr. Rockefeller would sell his property north of Tarrytown for \$350,000. Mr. Fielding stated that he had been authorized to put the property on the market before the 1st of September for Europe on June 30. The estate contains 640 acres, of which 170 acres have been laid out in drive-ways and otherwise improved. The buildings consist of a mansion, a barn and greenhouses. The improvements have cost, according to Mr. Fielding, \$350,000 and the original purchase price was \$125,000. The assessed valuation is \$2,500,000.

Rockefeller's Property.

Assessed valuation of William Rockefeller property....	\$2,533,805
Last year's valuation.....	1,100,000
Last year's taxes per day.....	50
Number of acres in property.....	646
Number of acres improved.....	178
Price paid by Rockefeller.....	\$125,000
Cost of building house.....	150,000
Cost of studies and greenhouses.....	100,000
Grading and building drive-ways.....	100,000
Total cost of improvement.....	350,000
Purchase price plus cost of improvement.....	475,000
Will now be sold for.....	350,000



William Rockefeller, Standard Oil Millionaire.

Goaded by Taxes, He Will Sell His Tarrytown Estate.

IS ASSESSED \$2,533,805.

But the Standard Oil King Has Put It on the Market at \$350,000.

Because of what he considers an excessive assessment by the authorities of Mount Pleasant township, in which his Tarrytown property is located, William Rockefeller has placed the property on the market. He sold his summer place at Greenwich, Conn., about eight years ago, on account of what he claimed was excessive taxation, and is now said to be looking toward Newport as a retreat from tax extortion.

Mr. Rockefeller is now in Europe. He sailed on June 30, and Henry Fielding, a real estate agent, of Tarrytown, who has been acting for Mr. Rockefeller in contesting the assessed valuation of a year ago, said yesterday that before sailing Mr. Rockefeller had authorized the sale of his property for \$350,000. The assessed valuation is \$2,533,805. Taxes for a year ago were \$1,100,000. The purchase price, according to Mr. Fielding, was \$125,000, and improvements have cost about \$225,000.

Next to his Sleepy Hollow and Sunnyside, made historical by Washington Irving, Tarrytown's chief claim to fame comes from the millionaires who live on the high plateau overlooking the Hudson. More men of wealth have homes within the town and nearby than in any other place of similar size in America.

Peace Relieved for a Time.

For years Tarrytown lived at peace with its summer residents, but recently the latter have complained of rural aversion. The feeling has become especially bitter since tax values were increased over twofold. The Rockefeller, John D. and William, who have estates there, the land owners of Europe north of the village, claim that they have been marked for special plunder, and last year they contested the assessments. The case was referred to the Court to Frank Couch, of Peekskill as referee, to take testimony. There have already been thirty-five hearings. The outlook is that there will be as many more hearings and another year's delay.

While the Rockefeller's were trying to have the alleged injury settled, they said that insult was added by the more than doubling of the very assessments they claimed were excessive. Now suits against these assessments are to be commenced, and the officials of Tarrytown supposed it was to be a fight to the finish. It never occurred to them that either of the Standard Oil magnates might end the contest of William Rockefeller did one of similar nature at Greenwich, Conn., by selling out and moving to another place where the taxes are treated with greater consideration.

William Rockefeller's place is the pride of the Pocomtuck Hills. It extends from the Hudson back over the hills. The property originally belonged to the Aspinwalls. Some of it is rough and unimproved, there is a stretch of swampy land to it and the rest of it is as fine land as there is along the Hudson.

Taxes \$50 a Day.

Mr. Rockefeller built a mansion on the property that cost about \$150,000. He constructed greenhouses, a big stable, and in the 170 acres that are laid out as a park he made fine drive-ways. The total cost of the improvements were about \$350,000, according to Mr. Fielding, and he says that because of the taxes, which are \$50 a day at present, and which will be greatly increased, Mr. Rockefeller is anxious to dispose of his property for the cost of the improvements, sacrificing the original purchase price and the increase in value.

"The property has been placed in the hands of three assessors," said Mr. Fielding yesterday. "It is realized that it will be hard to dispose of it, because men with \$500,000 for a country house do not crop every day. I understand that Mr. Rockefeller would like to move to Newport, where millionaires are treated with more consideration."

The property of William Rockefeller is located in the township of Mount Pleasant, which includes the villages of North Tarrytown and Pleasantville and the hamlets of Unionville, Pocomtuck Hills and Kensico. The assessed valuation of all the property in the township was last year \$4,500,000. This year it is \$10,000,000, so the increase in the Rockefeller assessments is about proportionate with that of the other property owners. The agents of the Rockefeller claim, however, that there have been discriminations against them. Mr. Fielding, as an instance, said that a block of William Rockefeller's property is sandwiched between two other plots, is assessed \$500 a day, while the other side of the block is assessed \$125 an acre, and on the other side a plot is assessed at \$187 an acre.

It's a Bluff, They Say.

The local authorities maintain that Mr. Rockefeller's offer to sell is merely a bluff for effect in the court proceedings, and they claim that he has no intention of selling.

His brother, John D., who is protesting against his assessment of \$501,125, as against \$175,000 last year, is continuing work on the big park on his place, and it is said that if either of the Standard Oil magnates thought of selling out they would stop the improvements. They maintain that there was no discrimination in the assessments, and that the increase was made necessary because of Justice Keogh's calling the assessors of Westchester County to time for not assessing property at its full value.

Some of the other property owners whose

## ROBERT BONNER CALLS IT "WESTROBBER" COUNTY. The Owner of Costly Horseflesh Charges the People of Westchester with Tax Robbery.

OWNER OF MAUD S. OBJECTS TO BEING "BLED."

This ought to be called Westrobber instead of Westchester County. The people here seem to consider any one from New York City fair game for plunder.—Robert Bonner, in an interview on the increased valuation of property in Tarrytown and vicinity.

The doubling of tax valuations in Westchester County has ruffled the even temper of Robert Bonner, whose horse breeding farm, three miles out of Tarrytown, has been assessed at \$28,000, as against \$11,200 last year. The farm consists of 113 acres, on which the only building are an old farm house and Mr. Bonner's stables.

There is a three-quarter-mile track back of the stables, and the rest of the place is devoted to raising hay rather than fancy farming. Mr. Bonner lives in his New York home the year around and on pleasant days goes to his Tarrytown place in the morning and returns in the evening. He wore a torn and weather-beaten straw hat and an old duster when found yesterday in the blacksmith shop on his place, a few yards away from the box stall of Maud S. Between sentences on rural finances he gave directions to a workman who was shoeing Westbrier and occasionally stepped out of the door to speak to a stableman who was exercising Maud.

"The effect of this foolishly attempt to bleed city people," he said, "will be to drive them to other suburban places. The old-time residents will then lose their chief source of income; they will kill the goose that lays the golden egg."

"This ought to be called Westrobber instead of Westchester County," continued Mr. Bonner, throwing a horseshoe to the floor by way of emphasis and thereby starting the high string Westbrier. A few pot words quieted the bay, however, and then

WESTROBBER COUNTY.

Put the Screws on City Men.

"The farmers ask half as much again for their hay from a city man as from one of their neighbors, and they put the price of straw up so high that I use shavings, shipped here in bales, for bedding for the horses. Instead of straw, I don't mind the money so much, but I don't like to be bled."

"I have made no personal investigation of the taxation in the town of Mount Pleasant, where my property is located, but I am informed that there has been discrimination against owners from the city, and I don't doubt it. The local people won't lose a chance if they can help it, of making us pay their taxes. The valuation of John D. Rockefeller's place is outrageous. No one supposes that William Rockefeller's place is worth \$2,500,000, but that is what it is assessed at. The assessment of John D. Rockefeller's place is equally out of proportion to its worth. The assessment on my farm is too high."

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McKinley's Buffalo Trip.  
Buffalo, N. Y., Aug. 4.—President McKinley has engaged rooms at the Niagara Hotel for three days during the Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic, beginning August 23.

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